

TransWest Express Transmission Project Newsletter

November 2014

Issue 5

BLM
Western

Public Comment on the Draft EIS

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Western Area Power Administration (Western) received a total of 435 individual comments on the TransWest Express Transmission Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Draft Land Use Plan Amendments between July and September, 2013.

During the 90-day Draft EIS public comment period, the BLM and Western hosted a series of 13 public meetings/hearings throughout the areas crossed by the proposed Project and alternative routes to provide information on the Project and the Draft EIS. The public meetings were held between August 14 and September 6, 2013.

The BLM and Western also received 109 comments that contained all or portions of one of the four form letters that were submitted for the Project. Following the close of the Draft EIS public comment period, comments were categorized and analyzed to identify issues and concerns. Within each comment submittal, individual comments were identified, reviewed and entered into an electronic database. The comment analysis process resulted in 1,963 substantive comments requiring responses.

The BLM and Western incorporated public comments in the upcoming Final EIS. The Final EIS will contain a Response to Comment appendix, which will provide a response to each unique substantive comment received and allow commenters to see how their comments have been addressed in the analysis.

About the Proposed Project

The TransWest Express Transmission Project would provide transmission infrastructure and capacity to deliver approximately 3,000 megawatts (MW) of electric power from renewable and other energy resources in south-central Wyoming to a substation hub in southern Nevada. The proposed Project would consist of an approximately 725-mile-long, 600-kilovolt (kV), DC transmission line, a northern terminal located near Sinclair, Wyoming, and a southern terminal approximately near Las Vegas, Nevada. The proposed transmission line would cross lands owned or administered by the BLM, USFS, National Park Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission, various state agencies, Native American tribes, municipalities, and private parties.

The BLM and Western are joint-lead agencies for preparing the EIS. The BLM and Western have included affected government entities as cooperating agencies in this EIS process.



Development of the Joint Agency Preferred Alternative

In response to public comments on the Draft EIS and the environmental analysis, the BLM and Western have jointly identified an Agency Preferred Alternative to be presented in the Final EIS.

The Agency Preferred Alternative in Wyoming and Utah reflects adjustments from the Preferred Alternative analyzed in the Draft EIS. In Colorado and Nevada, the Agency Preferred Alternative is unchanged from the Draft EIS.



EIS (NEPA) Process

Next Steps in the NEPA Process

The EIS (NEPA) process chart shows the completed and upcoming stages of the NEPA process. The Final EIS is targeted for release in April 2015.

The BLM will respond to comments received on the Final EIS as part of the Record of Decision.

The BLM and USFS will also provide objection/protest periods related to associated land use plan amendments during this time. The BLM, Western and the USFS will issue Records of Decision after objections or protests are resolved.

For Additional Project Information

Please visit the joint lead agency project websites:

BLM's project website: <http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/NEPA/documents/hdd/transwest.html>

Western's project website: <http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastructure/Pages/TransWestExpress.aspx>



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